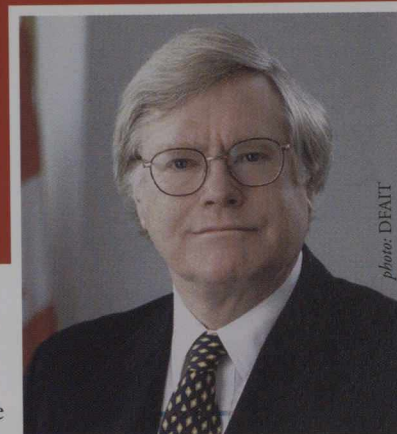


MICHAEL F. KERGIN

joined the Department of External Affairs in 1967, and has degrees from the University of Toronto and Oxford University. He served as Canada's Ambassador to Cuba from 1986 to 1989, and was Foreign Policy Adviser to the Prime Minister from 1998 until his appointment as Ambassador to the United States in 2000.



closer cooperation and information sharing, that we both enforce the regulations properly, the need for putting up a barrier between Canada and the United States disappears.

In my discussions with U.S. officials and Members of Congress, there has never been any indication of dissatisfaction with Canadian legislation as being somehow complacent about threats to the United States, nor has there been any discussion to the effect that they would want us to change our legislation. Although some isolated voices (usually ill-informed Canadian "talking heads") suggested that Canada was a haven for terrorists, the general sentiment in the U.S. administration is that they are pleased with the way we handle security issues, particularly those of common concern.

No two countries work more closely toward the common goal of ensuring the safety of their citizens against terrorism than do Canada

and the United States. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, local police, and customs, immigration and transport officials work with their American counterparts every day, 365 days a year. U.S. authorities have praised the work of all these Canadian agencies in the aftermath of September 11. This cooperation will not only continue but get closer.

Canada World View: Canada and the United States share the longest undefended border in the world. Isn't it likely that crossing the border will be more difficult than it was before the attacks? If so, what could be the long-term consequences for Canada's economy?

Michael Kergin: Our two economies are extremely integrated. Any action that would hamper the free flow of goods and people (with some 200 million people crossing

the border each year) would have disastrous consequences for Canada's economy. That is why we have to manage our common border intelligently.

We are currently cooperating in developing new ways to differentiate the low risk from the high risk. We want to ensure that people or goods which have uncertain or dubious provenance cannot cross the border and are directed to the proper authorities, while those which pose no risk can cross with a minimum of inconvenience. The resources that would be freed, particularly by using new information technologies, could then be used to prevent dubious people or goods from entering North America. What we need here is not so much a "perimeter of security" as a "zone of confidence" around North America. I'm confident we'll be able to achieve it. 🍁

The day after the attacks, trucks were backed up 27 kilometres from the U.S. border on Highway 402 at Reeces Corners, southern Ontario. Heightened security checks slowed cross-border traffic to a trickle.

